

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An exhaust-gas purifying apparatus, comprising:

an outer cylinder;

a plurality of cylinder-shaped supports disposed in the outer cylinder, and having an outer peripheral surface and an inner peripheral surface, at least two of the neighboring cylinder-shaped supports contacting with each other with the outer peripheral surfaces; and

a catalytic layer loaded on at least one of the outer peripheral surface and inner peripheral surface of the cylinder-shaped ~~supports; supports,~~

wherein the cylinder-shaped supports in contact, but not fitted into the outer cylinder, are inscribed in a circle having a diameter superior to an inside diameter of the outer cylinder, at least one of the cylinder-shaped supports has a ring-shaped cross-section with a cut-off having a peripheral length such that when the at least one of the cylinder-shaped supports is in elastically deformed state, the cylinder-shaped supports are inscribed in a circle having a diameter inferior to the inside diameter of the outer ~~cylinder, cylinder, and groups of the cylinder-shaped supports are disposed out of phase.~~

2. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped cross-section with a cut-off is a letter "C"-shaped cross-section.

3. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, wherein the cylinder-shaped supports are bonded with each other at the contacting outer peripheral surfaces.

4. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, wherein the cylinder-shaped supports contact with an inner peripheral surface of the outer cylinder

with the outer peripheral surfaces, and are bonded to the outer cylinder at the contacting outer peripheral surfaces.

5. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, the outer cylinder and the cylinder-shaped supports are metallic.

6. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 5, wherein the cylinder-shaped supports are formed of a perforated steel plate having a plurality of through holes.

7. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, wherein the cylinder-shaped supports are combined into a plurality of groups, and the groups are disposed in the outer cylinder at predetermined intervals in the axial direction of the outer cylinder.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, wherein the cut-off is continuous from one of the axial opposite ends of at least one of the cylinder-shaped supports to the other one of the axial opposite ends thereof.

10. (Original) The exhaust-gas purifying apparatus set forth in claim 1, wherein the outer cylinder is an exhaust pipe.